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October 25, 2004

MEMORANDUM
NSLP 2005-27
RCCI 2005-16

To: All NSLP Sponsors

From: Pat Cook and Katherine Stewart, RD, CPFM
Office of Child Nutrition and School Health
Nutrition Education Program Consultants

RE: Verification of Applications for Free and Reduced Price Meal Benefits

On September 11, 2003, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published a rule requiring the reporting of the results of verification of applications for free and reduced price meal benefits in School Food Authorities (SFAs).

The enclosed compact disc contains both a MS Access application and an Excel workbook to be utilized for verification results reporting. SFAs who verify twenty-five or fewer applications may opt to use either the MS Access application or the Excel workbook. The Excel workbook does not have any edit checks, thus allowing for error that could cause rejection of your report. Additionally, the MS Access application allows electronic submission of the reporting data.

School Food Authority Optional Verification Software: This folder contains an MS Access application which may be used by SFAs on an elective basis to compile the information on verification outcomes into a file which can be imported by the State Agency software. The disc also contains a Users Guide to the SFA application software, which includes installation instructions, and a Data Dictionary which defines the data elements in the application.

School Food Authority Optional Verification Workbook: This folder contains an MS Excel workbook which is an alternative to the MS Access application for SFAs which verify 25 or fewer applications per year. The workbook can be used to compile the summary report data and print a report. However, it does not apply the data edits which are built into the Access software to prevent reporting of inconsistent data. The folder also contains an instruction sheet for using the workbook.

Data for this reporting function is taken from applications on file with the SFA as of October 31, 2004. **Residential childcare institutions must also complete this form. Enrolled students in the residential childcare institutions are categorically eligible.**

Verification of a sample of applications is determined by current law as follows: By regulation, local school food authorities must verify the eligibility of children in a sample of approved free and reduced-price school meal applications. The sample size selected must be either (1) the lesser of 3% of, or 3,000, approved applications selected at random or (2) the lesser of 1% of all applications selected from "error-prone" application or 1,000 "error prone" applications, plus the lesser of ½ of 1% of, or 500, approved applications that provided a case number (in lieu of income information) showing participation in the food stamp program, a State TANF program, or the food distribution program on Indian reservations.

"Error-prone" applications are those that indicate monthly income within \$100 (or annual income within \$1,200) of the income eligibility limits for free or reduced-price school meals.

This report must be submitted to the Office of Child Nutrition and School Health by December 15, 2004.

If you have any questions, please contact Pat Cook at 775-687-9153 or Kathy Stewart at 775-687-9151.